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General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
54th meeting
held on
Friday, 7 April 1995
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 54th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. BARIMANI (Islamic Republic of Iran)
(Vice-Chairman)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

CONTENTS

AGENDA ITEM 146: FINANCING OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE PROSECUTION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA SINCE 1991 (continued)

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17 May 1995

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In the absence of Mr. Teirlinck (Belgium), Mr. Barimani (Islamic Republic of Iran), Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The meeting was called to order at 3.35 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 146: FINANCING OF THE INTERNATIONAL TRIBUNAL FOR THE PROSECUTION OF PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL HUMANITARIAN LAW COMMITTED IN THE TERRITORY OF THE FORMER YUGOSLAVIA SINCE 1991 (continued) (A/C.5/49/L.44 and A/C.5/49/L.50)

Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.50

1. Ms. ROTHEISER (Austria), introducing draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.50, which had been submitted by the Chairman following informal consultations, said that it would authorize the Secretary-General to enter into commitments in the additional amount of approximately US$ 7 million net for the period from 15 April to 14 July 1995 (para. 2). The General Assembly would resume its consideration of the question when it met again in June 1995, in order to decide no later than 14 July 1995 on all outstanding questions, in particular the mode of financing.

2. It was indeed regrettable that it was not possible for the General Assembly to take a decision at the present time on the substance of the proposals put forward by the Secretary-General. A final decision, including a decision on the mode of financing, had been deferred at the request of a few delegations which had felt that more time was needed to work out an acceptable compromise. That request had been agreed to with great reluctance in order to preserve consensus in the Fifth Committee, since it was felt that a consensus solution would ensure more stable financing in the long term.

3. Noting that a spirit of compromise had prevailed during the informal consultations and that bilateral contacts would be taking place before the Committee resumed its meetings, she expressed the hope that all outstanding questions concerning the financing of the tribunal could be resolved by mid-July. She recommended the draft resolution for adoption without a vote.

4. Mr. SCHAPER (Netherlands) said that, while his delegation would join the consensus on the draft resolution, it was disappointed that, once again, agreement had not been reached on a mode of financing for the Tribunal for reasons that had nothing to do with the proposed budget. The credibility of United Nations efforts in connection with both the maintenance of international humanitarian law and the situation in the former Yugoslavia was being undermined by the repeated inability of Member States to agree on a mode of financing for the Tribunal.

5. His delegation welcomed the inclusion of a deadline in the draft resolution and appealed to those countries which were most involved in the debate to make it their first priority to establish secure and stable financing for the Tribunal. Noting that during the informal consultations, it had been suggested

that new ways might be explored to resolve the problem, he expressed the hope that a decision would be taken when the committee resumed its meetings.

6. Draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.50 was adopted.

7. Mr. TAKASU (Controller) echoed the disappointment expressed by a number of members of the Committee that no agreement had been reached on the financing of the Tribunal. When the Tribunal had been established by the Security Council in May 1993, the Secretary-General had been authorized by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) to enter into commitments of up to $500,000 for the balance of 1993. The General Assembly had now authorized the Secretary-General to enter into commitments totalling $26,175,000 for the period from 1 January 1994 to 14 July 1995 but without corresponding assessments. Those commitments had been authorized in five instalments, for periods ranging from two weeks to six months. Clearly, that did not represent the "secure and stable financing" called for in General Assembly resolution 48/251.

8. The Tribunal had been operating for nearly two years without appropriations or an authorized staffing table. It had now entered a critical stage of operation which would be hampered by such a precarious financial base and by the lack of a secure basis for employing current and future staff.

9. He felt constrained to point out the undesirable consequence of the growing practice of authorizing expenditures without providing the corresponding resources through assessments. That had placed an extraordinary burden on the Secretariat and had made prudent financial management difficult. At present, the Secretary-General was operating without appropriations in the International Civilian Mission to Haiti, the United Nations Mission for the Verification of Human Rights and of Compliance with the Commitments of the Comprehensive Agreement on Human Rights in Guatemala, the International Criminal Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Genocide and Other Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the territory of Rwanda, and the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991. He had been obliged to borrow funds for those activities from other counts without any assurance that the necessary funds to replenish those accounts would be available to finance activities mandated by Member States. In any circumstances, that would constitute imprudent financial management; the perils involved were magnified by the cash position of the Secretariat. The Secretary-General would endeavour to carry out all mandated activities; however, should it prove impossible for him to do so, he could not be held responsible. He urged Member States to consider carefully the consequences of the decisions they took.

10. Mr. KEATING (New Zealand) said he shared the disappointment which had been expressed by the representative of the Netherlands prior to the adoption of the draft resolution and agreed with the Controller that the current mode of financing of the Tribunal did not constitute prudent financial management. In introducing draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.44, his delegation had expressed the view that it was irresponsible on the part of the General Assembly to continue to authorize commitment authority without corresponding appropriations. His

delegation had joined in the consensus in draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.50 because the Committee accorded high priority to taking action by consensus. That priority must not, however, be absolute; accordingly, his delegation would not withdraw draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.44. It welcomed the inclusion of a deadline for the adoption of a final decision in draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.50 and hoped that progress would be achieved in resolving the question of financing for the Tribunal before the Committee reconvened in June. Clearly, further compromise was necessary on all sides.

11. In conclusion, he said it was disappointing that, in the draft programme of work of the Committee for the period from 12 June to 14 July, consideration of agenda items 146 and 163 was scheduled towards the end of the series of meetings. If those items were not taken up earlier, the Committee would find itself in exactly the same impasse on 14 July as it was now.

12. Mr. HANSON (Canada) said that it did not speak well for the Committee that, after two years, it had been unable to achieve a consensus on the question of financing for the Tribunal. He recalled his earlier statement, delivered on behalf also of Australia and New Zealand, in which he had emphasized the need to take a final decision during the current series of meetings. His delegation had joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.50 only with the greatest reluctance and disappointment and on the understanding that new proposals were being developed. It would participate in consultations on any such proposals, which it hoped would prove acceptable. It would have preferred to see funding provided under the regular budget; however, in a spirit of flexibility, it would consider other options.

13. Canada, which was a sponsor of draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.44, submitted by New Zealand, had joined the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.50 on the understanding that draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.44 would be considered and voted on, if necessary, when the Committee resumed its meetings.

14. Continued recourse to unfunded commitment authority was a matter of great concern. His delegation had been all the more reluctant to join the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/59/L.50 because, under the Canadian Financial Administration Act, which governed the management of public funds, Canadian public funds could not be committed unless there was an appropriation with sufficient unencumbered balance to cover the expenditure. Developments over the past two weeks had prompted much consideration by some delegations, including his own, about the principle of consensus and much discussion of possible alternatives. His delegation hoped that a final decision would be reached by consensus. It remained committed to the principle of consensus and to the establishment of the broadest possible agreement in the Committee regarding recommendations on the outline of the programme budget in accordance with General Assembly resolution 41/213 II, paragraph 7.

15. Mrs. ARAGON (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77 and China, said that those countries attached great importance to ensuring a secure financial base for the Tribunal and had joined in the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.50 only with some misgivings. Earlier, the Group of 77 and China had agreed to continue consideration of the item until the end of the week in the hope that consensus would be achieved on all outstanding questions,

in particular the mode of financing for the Tribunal. They now hoped that genuine political will would prevail when the Committee resumed its meetings in June and that the deadline of 14 July 1995 would be met.

16. Mr. MADDENS (Belgium) recognized that the adoption of draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.50 had been perhaps the only possible course of action in the current circumstances. However, the fact remained that, since its establishment by the Security Council two years earlier, the Tribunal had lacked a sound financial base. He recalled that, several weeks earlier, the French delegation, speaking on behalf of the European Union, had urged Member States to take a final decision on financing for the Tribunal. The practice of granting commitment authority to the General Assembly, particularly in the light of the Organization's current financial situation, must not continue. In that context, his delegation fully understood the concerns expressed by the Controller. It hoped that a final decision would be taken at the earliest possible date on the basis of the most recent proposals put forward. Like the Canadian delegation, his delegation hoped to participate in consultations on those proposals.

17. Mr. SHARP (Australia) expressed his delegation's disappointment that no final decision had been reached on the financing of the Tribunal and referred to an earlier statement made by the Canadian delegation on behalf of Australia emphasizing the urgent need to arrange for funding. The fact that the Secretariat had to rely on commitment authority and internal borrowing for the functioning of the Tribunal was alarming. In that connection, his delegation supported the Canadian representative's remarks concerning the practice of granting commitment authority without assessments. His delegation would continue to participate actively in efforts to reach a decision at the earliest possible date with a view to ensuring full appropriation and assessment in order to enable the Tribunal to continue its work.

18. Mr. AHMED (Pakistan) said that his delegation shared the deep concern expressed by other members of the Committee over the failure to reach a final decision. He stressed the importance of taking action by consensus and urged member States to accord the highest priority to the question of financing for the Tribunal when the Committee reconvened in June.

19. Mr. ABOLHASSANI SHAHREZA (Islamic Republic of Iran) expressed regret that, in the two years since its establishment, the Tribunal had been forced to function on commitment authority. Every effort must be made to ensure that such provisional financing did not hamper its work. His delegation had reluctantly joined in the consensus on draft resolution A/C.5/49/L.50 on the understanding that a final decision would be taken when the Committee reconvened in June.

20. Mr. TARZI (Saudi Arabia) said that his delegation, too, deeply regretted the Committee's inability to reach a decision after two years. Although it had advocated financing from the regular budget, it was open to other proposals to ensure that the Tribunal was fully and securely financed. The July 14 deadline should be the final deadline. The work of the Tribunal must not continue to be impeded by internal disagreements within the Organization. In conclusion, he supported the proposal made by the representative of New Zealand concerning early consideration of agenda items 146 and 163 when the Committee reconvened in June.

21. Mr. KELLY (Ireland) echoed the disappointment expressed by other delegations. The Tribunal would now be forced to continue to operate on commitment authority for an additional three-month period. He hoped that the long-overdue decision on a secure and stable mode of financing would be taken when the Committee reconvened in June.

22. Ms. PEÑA (Mexico) said that her delegation also regretted the Committee's inability to take a decision and would be willing to participate in all efforts to resolve outstanding questions without resorting to a vote. Any solution adopted should provide for the establishment of a special account for the Tribunal outside the regular budget, and for the apportionment of expenses according to the scale used to finance activities under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations, the framework under which the Tribunal had been established.

23. The compromise solution proposed during informal consultations - whereby 50 per cent of the cost would be apportioned under the regular scale of assessments and 50 per cent under a special scale - seemed promising. New proposals for reaching a final decision would, of course, be successful only if they met the concerns of all Member States. Her delegation hoped that the Committee would take a final decision on the matter no later than 14 July 1995

The meeting rose at 4.10 p.m.

UNITED NATIONS

General Assembly

FORTY-NINTH SESSION

Official Records

FIFTH COMMITTEE
55th meeting
held on
Monday, 12 June 1995
at 3 p.m.
New York

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 55th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. TEIRLINCK (Belgium)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

CONTENTS

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

AGENDA ITEM 132: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

(a) FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

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20 June 1995

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The meeting was called to order at 3.30 p.m.

ORGANIZATION OF WORK

1. The CHAIRMAN drew the Committee's attention to the draft programme of work for the second part of the resumed forty-ninth session and status of documentation, and to the tentative programme of work for the first three weeks of the resumed session.

2. Mr. FATTAH (Egypt) said that in view of time constraints the Committee should focus on peace-keeping operations and on the International Tribunal for the Prosecution of Persons Responsible for Serious Violations of International Humanitarian Law Committed in the Territory of the Former Yugoslavia since 1991.

3. Mr. STITT (United Kingdom) said that he agreed with the representative of Egypt that the main focus must be on peace-keeping operations, in which connection he noted that some of the documentation for the larger operations was behind schedule. He would welcome information on the expected dates of issuance of the relevant documents. Documents were also not yet available on other major items, including procurement activities, telecommunications, reform of the internal system of justice - in which connection the views of the Committee for Programme and Coordination were not yet available - and the current financial situation of the Organization. In connection with the latter item, the question of cash flow was highly germane to the Committee's consideration of peace-keeping operations. It was thus particularly important to be updated on that matter, as well as on the United Nations telecommunications system, one of the most challenging projects undertaken in the Secretariat. He understood that a Joint Inspection Unit report was soon to be issued thereon.

4. The CHAIRMAN said that he would contact the Joint Inspection Unit regarding its report on telecommunications.

5. Ms. ARAGON (Philippines), speaking on behalf of the Group of 77, said that the Committee should allocate time in a formal meeting to continue the general debate on the financing of United Nations peace-keeping operations, perhaps at the next meeting.

6. Ms. BUERGO (Cuba) said that the reports of the Office of Internal Oversight Services should be taken up under the items to which they related, as was the practice with JIU reports.

7. Mr. HANSON (Canada) agreed that it was important to make an early assessment of the Organization's cash-flow situation, which must be borne in mind during consideration of peace-keeping operations and the war crimes tribunal.

8. The CHAIRMAN said that he would take it that the Committee wished to proceed on the basis of the draft programme of work, on the understanding that it would be amended as necessary.

9. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 132: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

(a) FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued) (A/49/717 and Corr.1 and 2 and A/49/904)

10. Mr. TAKASU (Controller), introducing the report of the Secretary-General on the support account for peace-keeping operations (A/49/717 and Corr.1 and 2), said that the United Nations had been engaged in peace-keeping operations for most of its existence. For many years support had been provided with posts funded under the regular budget. That had proved inadequate with the launching of the United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF) in the 1950s, at which time the Secretary-General had requested, in the budget for UNEF, additional posts for backstopping. Those so-called overload posts had been in addition to regular budget backstopping posts. The Committee would note that the funding of backstopping posts under the regular budget was thus not a recent development.

11. The provision of overload posts had been made more systematic in January 1990 with the establishment of the support account, to which every peace-keeping mission contributed 8.5 per cent of its civilian component cost. That contribution from each peace-keeping budget was, in turn, used to fund additional backstopping activities at Headquarters. Experience over the past few years had demonstrated the usefulness of the support account. Indeed, it would not have been possible to have supported the expansion in peace-keeping activities in recent years without the posts funded from that account.

12. In 1992 the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Peace-keeping Financing Division (Office of Programme Planning, Budget and Accounts) had been established, essentially making use of inherited resources. In the current biennium the Department of Peace-keeping Operations (DPKO) had 54 regular budget posts, excluding the depot at Pisa, while the Peace-keeping Financing Division had no regular budget posts. Thus all additional posts in DPKO and all posts in the Peace-keeping Financing Division were funded from the support account, either as temporary posts or as general temporary assistance.

13. Approval for support account posts had generally been given for short periods of one to six months, which had made it difficult to plan and to attract well qualified staff, a state of affairs which must be improved. There could be no doubt that the Organization would have peace-keeping responsibilities for many years to come, in view of which it was essential to establish a more secure and strengthened infrastructure for peace-keeping operations support.

14. The report now before the Committee indicated the rationale, scope and funding of backstopping. Backstopping was defined in the report as the overall direction, assistance and guidance given by Headquarters for ensuring the

effective planning, implementation and liquidation of peace-keeping operations, and comprised "core" and "non-core" functions.

15. Core functions related to the need for a permanent capability for the planning and orderly and timely launching of peace-keeping operations, even if no ongoing peace-keeping operation existed, and comprised management of key policy issues and organizational performance, strategic planning and start-up capacity. Other examples of core functions would include the management of organizational performance, in other words of staff and activities; follow-up activities that were integral to completion of a mission mandate; and substantive servicing of the Special Committee on Peace-keeping. Such core functions represented fixed costs and must be funded by the regular budget. All other backstopping functions were defined as "non-core".

16. The Secretary-General had identified a need for 88 core posts, of which only 61 were currently available; the balance of 27 would be requested in the context of the budget for the biennium 1996-1997.

17. A number of practical difficulties arose in respect of the unencumbered balance in the support account. The first related to the time lag between the submission of proposals by the Secretary-General and their approval by the Advisory Committee and the General Assembly; frequently approval was given just prior to the start of the period to which the proposals related, thus making planning difficult. Further, approval for support account posts tended to be for periods of six months, while additional requirements tended to be approved initially as general temporary assistance.

18. In order to remedy those shortcomings approval for support account posts should be on a longer, preferably annual, basis, so that the Secretary-General would be given authority in respect of staffing requirements for 12 months before the year in question started. Such a change would make it possible to plan on a more predictable basis.

19. The methodology for calculating income in the support account must also be kept under review. It had been established on the basis of 8.5 per cent of the civilian component costs of peace-keeping operations, although, in fact, the military strength of an operation also had an impact on backstopping.

20. Although the Secretary-General had determined that the total number of posts required for effective backstopping was about 630, in view of the expected level of the support account in 1995 a total of 431 posts had been requested for the year. Of those, 346 had already been authorized. With regard to conversion from general temporary assistance to temporary posts, of the 65 posts funded for the period 1 July to 31 December 1994, 4 had been regularized by the General Assembly, and the Secretary-General was requesting conversion of the remaining 61. An additional 24 posts were also being requested, justification for which was provided in the report. That would mean a total of 431 posts under the support account.

21. In conclusion, the Secretariat looked forward to a constructive dialogue on resolving the difficulties involved in attempting to recruit against posts

offered on a short-term basis in the hope that effective support could be provided for peace-keeping operations.

22. Mr. MSELLE (Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions) said that the report of the Advisory Committee (A/49/904) traced the history of the support account, which was intended to be nothing more than a simple mechanism to provide the Secretariat with a flexible, practical means of backstopping peace-keeping operations at Headquarters. The recent lengthy debates held in the Fifth Committee and in the Advisory Committee had arisen largely from a misconception of the purpose of the account and also from a tendency to use it for purposes not originally intended by the General Assembly. In recent years, the Advisory Committee had examined various methods of funding the support account, and it had debated the question again extensively at the current session. In the end, it had agreed with the Secretary-General that the current procedure of charging each peace-keeping operation with the equivalent of 8.5 per cent of the cost of the civilian component of that operation - namely the cost of salaries, common staff costs and travel - should be maintained because of its simplicity and practicability. Other methods had raised more problems than they had solved.

23. The purpose of the recommendations as set out in paragraphs 22 to 23 was to restore the original simplified procedure for consideration and approval of the expenditures for the support account in keeping with the current trend towards simplification. Further explanations would be given during the informal meetings of the Fifth Committee. There was absolutely no basis for the assumption that the Advisory Committee was proposing that it should be authorized to bypass the Fifth Committee, take on a legislative role, and approve posts and expenditure from the support account. There was nothing in paragraphs 22 to 23 which should lead to that conclusion; indeed, the procedure outlined in the report of the Advisory Committee had already been followed in the past. Similarly there was no basis whatsoever for the argument that the Advisory Committee was recommending assessment on Member States and would later decide how the funds would be spent. Every time the General Assembly approved the assessed funds for a peace-keeping operation, it also considered and approved the funds of the support account for the purpose of backstopping the peace-keeping operations in question. That was what the funds transferred to the support account were ultimately used for.

24. The question of effective management and control of the account had been a matter of concern to the Advisory Committee from the very inception of the concept. The report under review again touched on several management and control issues and drew attention, in the annex, to the previously published criteria to be used in examining proposals to establish posts and incur other expenses from the account.

25. The Committee had clearly abandoned the question of recommending criteria for determining core and non-core posts with respect to posts to be charged to the support account and those to be charged to the regular budget, having concluded that such an approach might lead to endless controversy and might even complicate debate on other aspects of United Nations financing; it had been informed that it might soon be seized with the question of core and non-core posts for humanitarian affairs.

26. The experience of operating the support account and considering the relevant reports of the Secretary-General and the often conflicting positions of Member States on the subject had all led the Advisory Committee to reaffirm that the regular budget "must be determined on the basis of proposals of the Secretary-General submitted in accordance with the financial regulations and General Assembly resolution 41/213" (A/48/955, para. 22). Thus, the Advisory Committee did not consider it appropriate to recommend, in the context of its review of the report of the Secretary-General (A/49/717), how many posts should be transferred from the support account to the regular budget. In accordance with the current practice, the views of the Advisory Committee on the subject would be presented in the first report of the Committee on the proposed programme budget of the biennium 1996-1997.

27. The recommendations contained in paragraphs 24 to 28, pertaining to resource requirements for 1995, if accepted, would permit operation of the account until the 31st of December 1995. The procedures recommended in paragraph 22 would, if accepted by the General Assembly, take effect as of 1 January 1996. Expenditure proposals for 1996 should be submitted to the Advisory Committee at the autumn 1995 session, together with the additional information requested in the current report of the Advisory Committee.

28. Finally, the Advisory Committee had held discussions on the most appropriate procedure for considering and presenting activities funded from the support account as opposed to the regular budget programmes. It had been suggested that support account activities might be considered in conjunction with the regular budget. In that connection, he indicated that resources for the support account were intended to support peace-keeping operations which, in accordance with resolution 49/233, would now be on a different financial cycle as compared with the regular budget financial cycle. Secondly, for information purposes, resources charged to the support account were shown in the extrabudgetary columns of the appropriate regular budget sections at Headquarters. That presentation, together with information on other extrabudgetary programmes, enabled Member States to have a fuller picture of total resources available to the section in question. Thirdly, whenever the Advisory Committee considered requests for expenditures from the account, it requested information on the related regular budget resources available to the section or Secretariat unit in question. Under the circumstances, the Advisory Committee had not made any recommendation regarding presentation and timing of the consideration of the support account in relation to the regular budget.

29. Mr. SCOTTI (France), speaking on behalf of the European Union, welcomed the Advisory Committee's recommendations for simplifying procedures regarding the functioning of the support account and agreed with the views set out in paragraphs 16 to 21 of its report (A/49/904). Whereas the debate on the criteria for "core" functions and "non-core" functions was no longer appropriate, the distinction between "fixed" expenditure for peace-keeping to be funded from the regular budget and "variable" expenditure, linked to work-load, to be funded from the support account was still relevant. As suggested, the second issue could be examined in greater depth when the draft programme budget for 1996-1997 came up for consideration. The Union would welcome more precise information from the Secretariat in order to understand better the flows of resources and expenditure against the support account, the extent and causes of

delays in operation of the account, and the use to which unencumbered balances would be put. It endorsed the recommendations set out in paragraphs 22-23 of the Advisory Committee's report and believed that the Advisory Committee should submit an annual report to the General Assembly, which the Fifth Committee could consider in the early part of the year when it considered budgets for peace-keeping operations.

30. With respect to funding for 1995, the European Union supported the conclusions and recommendations contained in paragraphs 24-28 of the Advisory Committee's report, particularly regarding the impact that decisions on peace-keeping operations provided for under the proposed programme budget for 1996-1997 would have on the support account. It also supported maintaining the 61 posts currently financed as temporary staff.

31. Ms. STODDARD (United States) said that while her country agreed that administrative expenses or core functions associated with peace-keeping should be included in the regular budget, it was important to insulate the latter from peace-keeping. The effective management of resources in the support account was crucial. Those resources should be subjected to the same scrutiny as the regular budget. Furthermore, they should be subject to the Organization's financial as well as staff rules and regulations. With respect to the recommendations in paragraph 22 (a) of the Advisory Committee's report, concerning the financing of the support account, the United States representative called for an immediate review of the percentage and the methodology for its calculation. Before deciding on an appropriate percentage charge, it would be necessary to assess the extent of expenses incurred at Headquarters in support of peace-keeping.

32. With respect to the procedures outlined in paragraph 22 (b), the United States considered that the role of the Advisory Committee should not be changed from advisory to legislative. Decisions relating to the level and number of posts should be decided by the General Assembly. Strict compliance with both the intent and spirit of the Organization's financial and staff rules and regulations was essential. Prior to approval of any new posts, all existing posts ought to be properly classified and assurances given that they were being used for the functions specifically authorized by the General Assembly. She supported the recommendations that the previously authorized level of temporary posts, totalling 346 should be extended to December 1995 and that action on the Secretary-General's request for an additional 24 posts should be deferred until later in 1995. She did not support converting posts from general temporary assistance to temporary. On the other hand, she agreed to the proposal to maintain the level of non-post resources to the end of the current year.

33. Mr. GJESDAL (Norway) said that given that preservation of peace and security was the first priority of the United Nations, resource needs at Headquarters for peace-keeping, including a stronger capacity to supervise and direct missions, should, as far as possible, be funded through the regular budget. At the recent session of the Committee for Programme and Coordination, Norway had supported the Secretary-General's request to increase by 27 the number of posts performing core functions relating to peace-keeping in the regular budget for 1996-1997. It believed that the Secretary-General should be provided with the resources necessary to carry out the peace-keeping mandates

that were in place and also to be able to meet the requests from Member States in various General Assembly resolutions. In view of the difficulty of backstopping the current scale of peace-keeping operations with the staff resources provided for under the regular budget, support account funding must continue to play an important role.

34. His delegation did not agree with the Advisory Committee's comment (para. 17) that the criteria proposed by the Secretary-General for determining the scope and use of the support account were often confusing. In its view, the concept of "core" functions remained valid and was indispensable for arriving at meaningful positions on the programme budget. Nevertheless, it agreed that it was necessary to refocus on the main objective of the support account and endorsed the Committee's new proposal (para. 22) for new arrangements relating to approval of expenditures. Thus, the Advisory Committee would consider, on behalf of the General Assembly, requests for variations of posts and other resources from previously established levels and would report annually to the General Assembly. Norway supported the Secretary-General's request (A/49/717, para. 38) for 24 additional posts funded by the support account and it would like to know how many military officers were currently working in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations and the Department of Administration and Management on loan from Member Governments.

35. Current funding arrangements for the 61 posts funded by the support account under general temporary assistance for six months at a time ran counter to good budgetary and personnel practices. He therefore fully supported regularization of the 61 posts in question referred to in the Secretary-General's report.

36. Mr. TOYA (Japan) stated that his country was basically supportive of the recommendations of the Advisory Committee in particular the effort to restore simplicity to the procedure for approval of expenditures on the support account. With reference to paragraph 21, however, he was of the view that the effort to set up criteria to differentiate between core and non-core posts was still valid.

37. Mr. GOKHALE (India) stated that the regular budget already contained a substantial amount for peace-keeping. He was willing to consider redeployment within the regular budget with a view to ensuring that the Department of Peace-keeping Operations received more posts but was not willing to consider defining what constituted core posts to go into the regular budget and what might constitute non-core posts to be funded out of the support account.

The meeting rose at 4.40 p.m.